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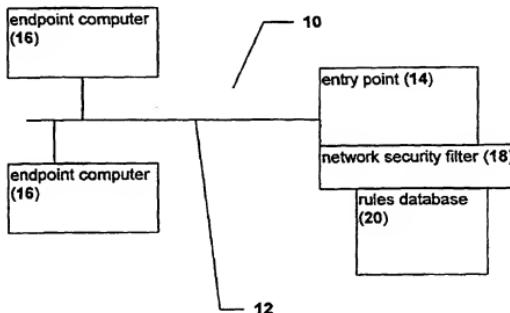
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(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PRESORTING RULES FOR FILTERING PACKETS ON A NETWORK



(57) **Abstract:** A method and a system for presorting rules for filtering a packet in a network security filter according to a characteristic of the packet, preferably according to at least one of the source address and destination address. The advantage of presorting rules before application to the packet is that the number of rules which must be examined should be significantly reduced. In addition, the source address and/or destination address can be associated with a particular profile, which may be associated with a particular user for example. The rules are also more easily managed according to such profiles, since the network manager or system administrator can choose a set of rules for the profile, and then amend the profile as a whole, rather than attempting to apply disparate, unrelated rules for filtering. Thus, the method and system of the present invention are more efficient both for actual filtering of packets, and for management of the security network filter.

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